

## **Newburyport Affordable Housing Trust Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: Thursday, November 3, 2022  
Meeting Location: City Hall, Mayor's Conference Room  
Members in Attendance: Co-Chair Susanne Cameron, Co-Chair Madeline Nash, Karen Weiner, Robert Currier and Mayor Reardon  
Staff Present: Katelyn Sullivan, Planner  
Members of the public: Meegan O'Neil, Essex County Habitat for Humanity

### Welcome, Introductions and Trust Overview

Affordable Housing Trust (AHT or Trust) Co-Chair Susanne Cameron called the meeting to order at 6pm. There was no public comment.

Cameron welcomed Meegan O'Neil, Executive Director of Essex County Habitat for Humanity. O'Neil thanked the Trust for having her present and said she wanted to give the Trust an overview of Habitat for Humanity and the work and collaborations on the North Shore and Merrimack Valley. O'Neil presented that the Essex County Habitat for Humanity was founded in 1985 and has built over 120 homes, rehabbed or repaired 43 homes serving the 34 communities of Essex County. O'Neil said that the average home is priced up to \$220,000 and the monthly payment is \$1,200 with a household income range of \$44,000-\$91,000.

O'Neil said that Habitat builds with the families that live in the homes by putting in sweat equity hours. There is a family selection process with information sessions and application, credit check, family interviews for housing need and partnership. There are also pre- & post-ownership classes as a form of homeowner support to families. These homes are deed-restricted, permanently affordable homes. There are several homes under construction in communities such as Lawrence (2 new), Peabody (1 rehab), Salisbury (7 new) and Hamilton (10 new). There are two new homes starting soon in Haverhill and critical home repairs for aging in place in several communities. O'Neil said that the AHT could look to have Habitat in Newburyport by supporting property disposition, updates to inclusionary zoning and CPC/AHT funding.

Mayor Reardon thanked O'Neil for presenting to the Trust and how important it was that the Trust, City and Habitat understand where resources and efforts may align in the future. Cameron thanked O'Neil for attending the meeting and looked forward to future discussions.

Sullivan updated the Trust with regards to the Newburyport Rental Assistance Program. Sullivan reported the below data as of 11/3/22:

1. Newburyport Rental Assistance COVID Funding  
To date nine (9) residents including (3 elders, 10 adults and 9 children) have been supported with rental assistance in the amount of \$21,236.00 and \$2,122.70 in administration supports totaling \$23,869.10 with a remaining balance of \$1,130.90
2. Newburyport Rental Assistance for Arrears /Current Rent

To date three (3) residents including (1 elder, 3 adults and 1 child) has been aided with rental assistance in the amount of \$4,184.00 with a remaining balance of 75,816.00.

3. Three applications are pending awaiting additional verifications to determine eligibility.

Sullivan communicated to the Trust that the Newburyport Housing Production Plan (HPP) expires **10/31/23**. The HPP will need to be updated over the next year and will involve a community/stakeholder process. To speed things up the most important thing the AHT can do right now is advise if members want to add/modify/change anything of substance in the 2011 RFP which was sent out during the previous HPP process.

Member Karen Weiner gave an update regarding the Brown School Ad Hoc Committee and said that Christine Madore from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership will be a facilitator during discussions.

The Trust discussed the next meeting date which was proposed to be December 5, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.